

COMMUNICATIONS.

[The New National Era does not hold itself responsible for views expressed by correspondents. Well written and interesting communications will be gladly received.]

Letter from Mississippi.

ROBINSON, Miss., May 22, 1872.  
To the Editor of the New National Era:

DEAR SIR: Seeing myself in the columns of a newspaper is a luxury I am free to confess I never had much taste for; nor would I seemingly be cultivating an appetite for it now did I not deem it my duty to correct the error into which you seem to have fallen.

In your issue of the 10th instant, I find the following:

"Senator Alcorn.

"This gentleman has some qualities that we admire. He is no coward, and that is something. What he thinks he speaks right out without much concern for himself as to who is pleased or who is offended. When running for Governor of the State of Mississippi he fairly struggled the pretensions of the unscrupulous scoundrels in the remorseless grasp of his logic. In that case he had a decided advantage. He knew that he was a citizen of a great nation as well as a citizen of a noble State; that secession was a dead failure; that citizenship of a State cannot warrant any abridgment of the colored people or the citizen of the United States; and in fact the State can have no rights against the United States. That was great knowledge for a Southern man at the time he learned it; and with that knowledge he accepted the situation. In addition to this knowledge and this wisdom he flung himself boldly between the colored people and the reactionary forces arrayed in his State against them as well as those against the Federal Government. He was the only man in the class, he well knew how to integrate himself with the former slaves of Mississippi. He did not approach them like Miss 'Feely,' of Uncle Tom's Cabin, holding them at a distance. He was not afraid of contact with negroes, for negroes, he has had nursed at the breast of colored mothers. He had seen negroes about him and took counsel with them. He was rich, and could well afford to give them meat and drink under his own roof and make them political associates. By his possessions of friendship and apparent indifference he won the heart of the colored people, and by their support (for they are the majority) he reached the gubernatorial chair and finally the high place he now fills in the Senate of the United States. No man who holds a seat in the Senate owes less to the rebels, no man more to the colored people than this same Senator Alcorn. They have made him."

All of which I can safely assert is true. If your article had ended here I could not have commended it; but it goes on to say that—

"It is now turning his back upon the men who made him and joining with their enemies to keep them a degraded caste."

Now, Mr. Editor, I can say, without fear of successful contradiction, that the last sentence finds no justification neither in truth nor in fact. Having traveled over more than two-thirds of this State in 1869 with Governor Alcorn as a co-worker in the cause of Republicanism and freedom; having enjoyed his confidence to as great an extent, perhaps, as almost any man in Mississippi, conversing with him often and freely upon the questions that you, Mr. Editor, as well as myself and all other friends of liberty and progress are most deeply interested in, to wit, "the elevation and advancement of our race," I can conscientiously assure you that Senator Alcorn is as true a friend to the interests of the colored man as any member of the Republican party, be he from the North, South, East, or West. He has proved it in this State, and posterity will affirm it, and I predict that he will also prove it in the Senate of the United States.

The Republican party of Mississippi is peculiarly situated upon the question of amnesty. You doubtless remember that the Republican party rode into power on a platform teeming full of pledges to the people that "it would use all its influence with Congress for the immediate removal of all political disabilities" imposed by the fourteenth amendment for participation in the rebellion.

Indeed, Mr. Editor, if it was possible the Republican party of Mississippi were more zealous in their advocacy of amnesty than the Liberal Conservative National Union Republican Dent party were, and the first act of the Legislature, after ratifying the amendments and electing U. S. Senators, was to pass a resolution (without a dissenting vote) memorializing Congress to give us "unconditional and unrestricted amnesty," they at the same time made it obligatory upon Senator Revels to present to the U. S. Senate that memorial, and in addition to the above, the same Legislature passed resolutions upon two occasions instructing our Representatives in Congress to use their influence to secure the passage of an act giving general amnesty. More than this, Mr. Editor, every Republican State Convention held since reconstruction have reaffirmed the pledges contained in our platform of 1869. This showing, I think, justifies Senator Alcorn's vote in the United States Senate, for I hold that the pledges of a political party should be held as sacred as those of an individual.

Some one has said that "Consistency is a jewel." If this be true, don't you think, Mr. Editor, your "deep regret" as to Senator Alcorn's course in voting against attaching the civil rights amendment to the amnesty bill would be equally applicable to President Grant's position upon the same question? For you certainly have not forgotten that President Grant told a delegation of colored men, who waited upon him (no later than last winter) to request him to use his influence to secure the passage of Mr. Sumner's amendment, "that he thought there had been legislation enough upon that question, but if more was really needed he felt quite certain that Mr. Sumner's bill would pass upon its own merits, and that he did not think the civil rights amendment and amnesty bill should be attached to each other, as the former only required a majority vote and the Executive signature, while the latter required a two-thirds vote. Therefore the one endangered the passage of the other." Hence the injustice of your condemnation of Senator Alcorn and your praise of President Grant.

In conclusion, allow me to say that you need have no "deep regret" as to the position of Senator Alcorn upon the question of civil rights when it shall come up on its merits. He will be found every time with the friends of progress and right.

Respectfully yours against the Cincinnati and for the Philadelphia nominee and civil rights,

SAM'L J. IRELAND.

Obituary.

The death of Rev. William Thompson, which occurred in this city on the 9th ult., deserves more than a passing notice. The religious portion of the community has lost a faithful standard bearer.

The deceased was born in the city of New York, in the year 1809, being the third of nine children of Thomas and Hebe Thompson. At the age of eighteen he was converted, and baptized by Rev. Benj. Paul. Having received a thorough religious training he became devoted to the cause, and was exceedingly useful in the church. In 1835 he was licensed to preach, and ten years later was ordained to the Gospel ministry, and immediately took charge of the Second Baptist Church in Geneva, New York. His labors were very successful.

In 1848 he took charge of the Third Baptist Church, New Haven, Connecticut. In 1850 he moved to Boston, where he took charge of the First Independent Baptist Church, which flourished under his care, he being held in high esteem. In 1858 he had charge of the Meeting Street Baptist Church, Providence, Rhode Island. After a successful ministry of two years he removed to Boston, where he made his home the rest of his days.

For a number of years, while his health permitted, he performed the duties of traveling missionary, but at last, like thousands who have gone before, he was compelled to succumb to disease. He lingered long with chronic consumption; was patient through his sickness, feeling assured that his future would be with the blessed saints in heaven above. He was always urgent in his appeals with all he came in contact to enlist in the cause of Christ, and obtain eternal reward. Shortly before his death he referred to several deceased persons, who, though in apparent good health at the time of his first sickness, have long since departed, and said, "I suppose they wonder what has become of me, but I soon shall join them in praises to God."

On the 9th of May he gently breathed his last on earth, at the age of sixty-three.

The funeral took place on the 14th ult., at the Bowdoin Square Baptist Church, of which he was a member. Rev. A. Ellis officiated. A large number of persons witnessed the last rites.

He was buried at Woodlawn Cemetery. He leaves a widow and four children to mourn his loss.

With a life unclouded, years of activity in the promotion of the Christian religion, he has left a noble record for the benefit of the rising generation, and is now receiving his reward in heaven.

P.  
BOSTON, May 27, 1872.

VICKSBURG, MISS., May 26, 1872.

To the Editor of the New National Era:

I have noticed that quite a spirited colloquy took place in the Senate Chamber on Tuesday last between our two Senators from this State—Ames and Alcorn. Senator Ames does not boast of a gift of gab, while Senator Alcorn considers that his forte. We were disposed at one time to think that Mr. Alcorn would prove a bright light in the Republican party, but the reflection of General Ames' consistency and loyalty to the party that sent him to the United States Senate, makes Alcorn appear as an opaque body. Mr. Alcorn may indulge in long speeches, may let all the Senators know that he is a rich man, and owns a large plantation in this State; he may try to make himself appear far superior to General Ames, but the loyal people of this State know General Ames to be a true man, tried in the furnace and not found wanting, and with the people to-day he stands far above Mr. Alcorn. The Democrats of the State call Mr. Alcorn "Windy Jim." We are not disposed to apply the same appellation, but, judging from his frequent efforts to denounce General Ames, and build himself up, possibly, upon his ruins, we think the Democrats christened him pretty truly.

We noticed that Mr. Alcorn said, in the recent debate alluded to, that the colored people of this State do not wish the passage of Mr. Sumner's Civil Rights Bill! Such an assertion is altogether gratuitous and totally unfounded. We do wish it, and he knows it too. When he replied to General Ames' remark about the passage of a resolution at our recent convention similar to Mr. Sumner's bill, that it was passed at the close of the session, and in an excited moment, he knew not what he was uttering, or, if he did know, then he was wanting in veracity. I was a member of the committee on resolutions, and was the author of the particular resolution calling for full and equal civil rights to their fellow-citizens for all the inhabitants of our country. And when we reported, Mr. Sullivan, of Bolivar county, one of the truest and wisest of our white Republicans, offered an amendment to the effect that the Republican party should nominate no one hereafter for any office without a previous pledge in favor of civil rights. All of which were unanimously passed full two hours or more before the adjournment of the convention. It seems to us that Mr. Alcorn does not intend to act according to the wishes of the majority of the people of his State; and it is but another evidence of the mistake our people made in first making him Governor, and before giving him a month's trial in his gubernatorial position, elevated him to the position of United States Senator! He has five years yet to play his hand upon us, but we hope always to have some one present like General Ames to cancel his vote when given against us. We noticed that he dodged the vote on the civil rights bill recently taken, while General Ames, not forgetful of his suffering constituents, voted manfully for its passage. We are afraid Mr. Alcorn is acting the fable of the snake. It seems strange that he should feel inclined to act the traitor after being so thoroughly abused by the Democrats. He certainly has nothing to expect from them. For if they had given him the vote he certainly would not have given it to them. Last fall, during our campaign, the Democrats of this county held large and enthusiastic meetings in the skating rink of this city, and at one of their meetings, among other resolutions, one was passed relative to Mr. Alcorn, to wit:

"Resolved, That we regard Jas. L. Alcorn, the present Governor of the State of Mississippi, as an open and avowed enemy of his race; that we denounce him as a corrupt tool of a vindictive and remorseless party; as the friend and abettor of the vilest set of vultures that ever preyed upon a peaceful and unoffending people; that we utterly repudiate and condemn the doctrine as enunciated by him; that nothing short of the gallows is a punishment to a free, honorable, and high-

European Republicans.

Emilio Castelar's Portrait and Character.

The promised series of papers by Emilio Castelar, the Spanish Republican leader, is commenced in the June number of *Harper's Magazine*, and will be continued through the volume of the September issue, with a review of the work of the eighteenth century, proceeds to an exposition of the Democratic tendencies of Europe, and draws striking portraits of Lamartine, Victor Hugo, Lamennais, Raspail, Lohéfort, and Gambetta. We copy below his sketches of the two latter:

ROCHEFORT.

Rochefort represented the audacious and extreme wing of the Republican party. His popularity, like his writings, had more to do with the popular imagination than with the intellect. He was a child of Paris, a scion of the Boulevard, employed on light and sparkling newspapers, gifted with the Parisian faculty which converts into readable articles the whispers of the café, with an iron will, no trifling word, he was the first to dare to throw the omnipotent Cæsar, and to attack in his face all the gall collected in twenty years of humiliation and slavery. Satire is a powerful corrosive. His bitterness does not reach the lips without being filtered through the meshes of his tongue, and he is careful to compare his ideals of perfection with the reality. And when that satire burst forth, and after the satire a universal Homeric laughter, and after the laughter the anger of the irritated victim, which amounted to a personal insult, and he was not content to compare his ideals of perfection with the reality. And when that satire burst forth, and after the satire a universal Homeric laughter, and after the laughter the anger of the irritated victim, which amounted to a personal insult, and he was not content to compare his ideals of perfection with the reality. And when that satire burst forth, and after the satire a universal Homeric laughter, and after the laughter the anger of the irritated victim, which amounted to a personal insult, and he was not content to compare his ideals of perfection with the reality. 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